

Information about The Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

In 1987, the Legislature created the OMHDD, an independent state agency, to:

“...promote the highest attainable standards of treatment, competence, efficiency and justice... for persons receiving services or treatment for mental illness, developmental disabilities, chemical dependency or emotional disturbance...”

Death and Serious Injury Reporting

An agency, facility or program is required to report to The OMHDD the death or serious injury of a client within 24 hours of the incident.

Call: (651) 757-1800 or (800) 657-3506
Fax: (651) 797-1950

Equal Opportunity Statement

The OMHDD does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, marital status or status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, membership in a local human rights commission or disability in employment or the provision of services.

This material can be given to you in different forms, like large print, Braille or on a tape, if you call 1-651-757-1800.

Regional Ombudsman staff provide assistance to clients living in the community as well as at the Regional Treatment Centers.

Anoka:	651-431-5201
Fax:	651-797-1964
Brainerd:	218-828-2366
Fax:	651-797-1965
Duluth:	218-279-2526
Toll Free:	877-766-5481
Fax:	651-797-1966
East Metro:	651-757-1810
Fax:	651-797-1953
Fergus Falls:	218-736-1895
Fax:	651-797-1955
St. Peter:	507-985-2052
Toll Free:	888-845-6116
Fax:	651-797-1959
SW Metro & SE MN:	651-757-1812
Fax:	651-797-1957
West Central MN:	320-231-5962
Fax:	651-797-1963
West Metro:	651-757-1811
Fax:	651-797-1951

The Office of Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities

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Metro Square Building, Suite 420
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2117

Voice: 651-757-1800 **Fax:** 651-797-1950

Toll Free: 1-800-657-3506

MN Relay Service: 711

E-mail: ombudsman.mhdd@state.mn.us

Website: <http://mn.gov/omhdd>



STATE OF
MINNESOTA

THE OFFICE OF OMBUDSMAN FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (OMHDD)

**ASSISTING PERSONS
RECEIVING SERVICES FOR:**

**MENTAL
ILLNESS
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES
CHEMICAL
DEPENDENCY
EMOTIONAL
DISTURBANCE**

REVISED 6/2015

Definitions

Ombudsman is an official who is designated to assist you to overcome the delay, injustice, or impersonal delivery of services.

Client is any person served by an agency, facility, or program, who is receiving services or treatment for mental illness, developmental disabilities, chemical dependency, or emotional disturbance.

Agency means (1) the divisions, officials or employees of the Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Department of Education, local school districts or (2) county social services agencies "that are engaged in monitoring, providing, or regulating services or treatment for mental illness, developmental disabilities, chemical dependency or emotional disturbance."

Facility or Program means a residential or non-residential program or an acute care inpatient facility that provides services or treatment for mental illness, developmental disabilities, chemical dependency or emotional disturbance. The latter includes psychiatric units in private hospitals.

Why call an Ombudsman?

You may choose to call with:

- a concern or complaint about services
- a question about rights
- a grievance
- access to appropriate services
- an idea for making services better
- a general question or need for information concerning services for persons with mental disabilities

How We Decide Who We Can Assist

Concerns or complaints can come from any source and should involve the actions or inactions of an agency, facility or program. Issues can be client-specific or a system-wide concern.

Priority is given to:

- Matters affecting the health, safety or welfare of clients
- Situations of abuse or neglect
- A disregard of client rights
- The deaths and serious injuries of clients
- The quality of services provided
- Policies and practices that diminish client dignity or independence
- Laws or rules, their interpretation and their effect on services to clients

Actions We May Take

The OMHDD tries to resolve concerns or complaints in a way that improves the quality of care clients receive.

Possible actions by the OMHDD include:

- Mediate or advocate on behalf of a client
- Consult with providers about policies, practices and procedures
- Gather and analyze information
- Conduct reviews and/or investigations
- Review Deaths and Serious Injuries
- Examine records
- Make site visits
- Make recommendations, issue reports and monitor results

Things to Try Before Calling an Ombudsman

A difference of opinion or misunderstanding is often resolved by simply taking the time to talk and listen. Here are some basic steps in trying to resolve the issue yourself.

- **Be Prepared** - have relevant information available before you call the agency or program. A short telephone call may save hours of time and headaches.
- **Be Pleasant** - treat others as you would like to be treated. Getting angry or rude will not resolve the problem and may confuse the real issues.
- **Keep Records** - take notes, ask for names and titles of those you speak to and keep all correspondence.
- **Ask Questions** - ask why the agency or program did what they did. Ask for the relevant rules, policies, or laws.
- **Read Everything Sent To You** - Many agency decisions may be appealed but there are deadlines and procedures to follow.

If you have followed these suggestions and are unable to resolve your problem, please give us a call. We may be able to assist you.

When you make a complaint in good faith, Minnesota State Law protects you from retaliation.